THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c). Coconut Development Board is implementing a scheme for expansion of area under coconut which includes coastal areas of the country including Orissa. This scheme is under implementation in the state of Orissa since 1984-85. Under this scheme, the Board provides and incentive subsidy of Rs. 3000/ - per ha. to small and marginal farmers in three annual instalments. So far an area of 1377 ha. has been covered in the State under fresh planting with a total subsidy of Rs. 25.927 lakh.

(d) and (e). The Eighth Five Year Plan has not yet been finalised. However, a tentative target for coverage of additional 2500 ha during the Plan period has been fixed for Orissa.

[*Translation*]

Bilateral Relations with Singapore

2671. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken/porposed to be taken by the Government to strengthen further the bilateral relations with Singapore; and

(b) the response of Singapore thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b). Both India and Singapore equally share the keen desire to strengthen and further expand their bilateral relations. Both sides have made consistent efforts to promote them in all fields of mutual interest. These efforts include, inter-alia, exchange of high level visits, exchange of officials delegations from business and industry, holding of seminars such as the one of investment in India recently held in Singapore and participation by both countries in each other's trade fairs and exhibitions.

[*English*]

Expansion of Haldia Refinery

2672. SHRI SATYA GOPAL MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state the steps taken by the Government for expansion of Haldia refinery during the Eighth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): There is no proposal to expand the Haldia Refinery during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

Rice Research Centre in Assam

2673. SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Council of Agricultural Research propose to set up a Rice Research Centre in Barpeta district of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K.C. LENKA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Does not arise.

Skimmed Milk Powder

2675. SHRI T.J. ANJALOSE:
SHRI M. RAMANNA RAI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any request from the Government of Kerala for the allotment of Skimmed Milk Powder;